

That'll be our Little Secret

A BOB ROSS Autobiography

By: Marcel Ray Duriez

An acknowledgment to Bob Ross- everything you need to know in one book for a paper or document- Bob Ross- the soft-spoken artist known for painting happy clouds, mountains, and trees-Happy Little Accidents- that we'll be you and I's little secret. His style and encouraging words are a form of therapy for the exhausted, but with Bob, it is always about more than painting- it was about bring JOY to others.

Remember- all the wise and witty words, and find out new fun facts- that you did not know. Ross has enchanted us for years with the magic, that takes place on his canvas in twenty-six television minutes- making worlds in few brush strokes. Like painting pictures with words, and making would appear out blank canvas. Read about his full life for start to his death and even after- for more than- 26 years after his death- he has been touching the hearts of artist around the world- a HAPPY legacy, that is no longer a secret.

(This book has been endorsed on the official Bob Ross Facebook page.)

<http://bobrossquotes.com/quotes.shtml> all quotations word for word.

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‘That’ll be our little secret!’ (Bob Ross)

26 years later Bob Ross is still touching people and hearts around the world with his style of painting.

1

‘That you could never make a mistake in painting
Bob Ross was the inventor of a new style of fast and effective
painting ‘That’ll be our little secret.’

That you could never make a mistake in painting bob
ross was the inventor of a new style of fast and effective
painting called wet on wet, his famous easel was made out of a
latter, and his art palette made from an old vinyl sign- that he
cut himself, in painting, you have unlimited power.

Ture in this style you have time to make movements
changes, and or paint over, yet there is a limit to this also if you
don’t want to become a mud mixer, I myself have been painting
this for years, in oil and also in acrylics the same thing applies,
you have the ability to move mountains.

‘You have to have the dark to see the light!’ Bob did
that- Robert Norman- Ross (October 29, 1942 - July 4, 1995)

was an American painter, art instructor, and television host. He was the creator and host of The Joy of Painting, an instructional television program that aired from 1983 to 1994 on PBS in the United States and also aired in Canada, Latin America, and Europe.

With a soft voice and a permed fro.

2

Bob Ross went from being a public television personality in the 1980's and 1990's to be an Internet celebrity in the 21st century, popular with fans on YouTube and many other websites. You can bend rivers.

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'And you can with his books and videos showing you everything you need to know... Remember our Golden Rule: A thin paint sticks to a thick paint. Bob Ross Rural Paint Set with extras contains the following:

8 Bob Ross Oil Paints: Bright Red, Phthalo Blue, Midnight Black, Alizarin Crimson, Cadmium Yellow, Van Dyke Brown, Titanium White, Sap Green, (1.25 oz. each) 1' Brush, 2' Brush, Large Fan Brush, Liner Brush, Large Painting Knife, Liquid White and a 90- Minute DVD that covers each painting (Winter's

Peace, Old Country Mill and Days Gone By) in great detail... PLUS!... a Bob Ross Canvas, a Bob Ross Clear Plastic Palette, 32 oz. Bob Ross Odorless Thinner (ground service delivery only) and how- to written instructions for the three beautiful Bob Ross scenes!'

This offer available only in the United States and Canada. But when I get home, the only thing I have power over is the garbage.

Early life, Ross was born in Daytona Beach, Florida, and raised in Orlando, Florida.

3

Bob had a half-brother, Jim, whom he mentioned in passing on his show. While working as a carpenter with his father, Ross lost part of his left index finger, but it did not affect the way he held his palette while painting. Military career Ross enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1961 at 18 years old and served as a medical records technician.

15 He eventually rose to the rank of expert sergeant and served as the first sergeant of the U.S. Air Force Clinic at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska, where he first saw the snow

and mountains that later became recurring themes in his artwork. He developed his quick-painting technique to create art for sale during brief daily work breaks.

Having held military positions that needed him to be, in his own words, 'tough' and 'mean', 'the guy who makes you scrub the latrine, the guy who makes you make your bed, the guy who screams at you for being late to work', Ross decided that if he ever left the military, he would never scream again.

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING-'And that makes it look like birch trees, isn't that sneaky? Heh, Ha, It's gorgeous.'

4

Career as a painter while staying in Alaska, Ross was working as a part-time bartender when he discovered a TV show called The Magic of Oil Painting, hosted by German painter Bill Alexander. 17-18 Ross studied with Alexander and afterward discovered that he was able to earn more from selling his artwork than his position in the Air Force. Ross retired from the Air Force in 1981 after 20 years of service, having the rank of Master Sergeant, and became famous worldwide for creating and hosting the TV program The Joy of Painting.

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'You know me, I got to put in a big tree.' Before the show launched, Ross had little success promoting his painting technique. His trademark permed hairstyle came about as a cost-cutting measure when regular haircuts became too expensive. Ross was never comfortable with the style but kept it throughout his career.

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Here's your bravery test!'

The show had its first run from January 11, 1983, to May 17, 1994, but reruns continue to appear in many broadcast areas and countries, including the PBS- oriented network Create. During each half-hour segment, Ross would instruct viewers in oil painting using a quick- study technique from the imagination that used a limited palette of paints and broke down the process into simple steps. Art critic Mira Schor compared him to- Fred Rogers, host of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood, noting that Ross's soft voice and the slow pace of his speech were similar-

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Got to give him a friend.

Like- I always say, BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING-
'everyone needs a friend.'

Ross also filmed wildlife, squirrels, usually in his garden shed, and he would often take in injured or abandoned squirrels and other animals. Small animals often appeared on his Joy of Painting.

5 canvasses- Ross built a \$15 million business selling his line of art supplies and how-to books, and marketing painting classes taught by instructors trained in the 'Bob Ross method.'

All of his income, he said, was derived from those sources; all of his paintings, including those created during his shows, were donated to PBS stations.

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING-'We don't know where it goes. We don't really care.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Anytime yah learn, yah gain.'

Ross used the wet- on- wet oil painting technique, in which the painter continues adding paint on top of

still- wet paint rather than waiting a lengthy amount of time to allow each layer of paint to dry. From the beginning, the program kept the choice of tools and colors simple so that viewers would not have to make large investments in expensive equipment.

Ross often recommended odorless paint thinner (aka odorless mineral spirits) for brush cleaning. Combining the wet painting method with the use of large one- and two- inch brushes, as well as painting knives, allowed Ross to paint trees, clouds, mountains, and water in a matter of seconds. Each painting would start with simple strokes that appeared as nothing more than smudges of color. As he added more and more strokes, the blotches would transform into intricate landscapes.

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Any way you want it to be, that's just right.'

Ross created three versions of each painting for each episode of his show. The first was painted prior to taping, and sat on an easel, off- camera, during a taping, where Ross used it as a template to create the second copy- the one viewer actually watched him paint. After taping the episode, Ross

painted a third, more detailed version for inclusion in his instructional books.

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'As my son Steve says, just '*smoosh*' it in there. It's not a real word, but people seem to know what it means.'

6

'Be sure to use odorless paint- thinner. If it's not odorless, you'll find yourself working alone very, very quick.'

Influences- Ross dedicated the first episode of the second season of The Joy of Painting to Bill Alexander, explaining that 'years ago, Bill taught me this fantastic (wet- on- wet) technique, and I feel as though he gave me a precious gift, and I'd like to share that gift with you (the viewer) 'As Ross's popularity grew, his relationship with Alexander became increasingly strained. 'He betrayed me,' Alexander told the New York Times in 1991.

'I invented 'wet on wet', I trained him, and...

he thinks he can do it better.' Art historians have pointed out that the 'wet- on- wet' (or all- a prima) technique

actually originated in Flanders during the 15th century, and was used by Frans Hals, Diego

Velázquez, Caravaggio, Paul Cezanne, John Singer Sargent, and Claude Monet, among many others-

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Let's just blend this little rascal here, ha! Happy as we can be.'

7

Style- Ross was well known for the catchphrases he used while painting such as 'Happy Little Trees.' In most episodes of The Joy of Painting, Ross would note that one of his favorite parts of painting was cleaning the brush.

Fact- stander canvas was 16 x 24 pre-stretched... Specifically, he was fond of his method of drying off a brush that he had dipped in odorless thinner by striking it against the thinner can (then striking a box for early seasons, and trash can for later seasons; occasionally he would strike the brush hard on the trashcan and say he 'hit the bucket') and easel.

He would smile and often laugh aloud as he said to 'beat the Devil out of it.' He also used a palette that had been

lightly sanded down, which was necessary to avoid catching the reflections of the strong studio lighting.

When asked about his laidback approach, and his calm and contented demeanor, he commented, 'I got a letter from somebody here a while back, and they said, 'Bob, everything in your world seems to be happy.' That's for sure. That's why I paint. It's because I can create the kind of world that I want, and I can make this world as happy as I want it. Shoot, if you want bad stuff, watch the news.'

The landscapes he painted- typically mountains, lakes, snow, and log cabin scenes- were strongly influenced by his years living in Alaska, where he was stationed for the majority of his Air Force career. He repeatedly stated on the show his belief that everyone had inherent artistic talent and could become an accomplished artist given time, practice, and encouragement, and to this end was often fond of saying, 'We don't make mistakes; we just have happy accidents.'

In 2014, the blog FiveThirtyEight conducted a statistical analysis of the 381 episodes in which Ross painted live, concluding that 91 percent of Ross' paintings contained at least one tree, 44 percent included clouds, 39 percent included

mountains and 34 percent included mountain lakes. By his own estimation, Ross completed more than 30,000 paintings in his lifetime.

8

Other media appearances- Ross was fond of country music, and in 1987 he was invited on stage by Hank Snow at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville. The audience gave him a huge ovation; he was a little nervous at first but felt better after cracking a joke on the crowd. Snow was later given a private painting lesson by Ross.

Ross visited New York City to promote his hardcover book, *The Best of the Joy of Painting with Bob Ross*, and painting techniques to a studio audience several times. One visit in 1989 he appeared on *The Joan Rivers Show*. He returned in 1992 for a live show with hosts Regis Philbin and Kathie Lee Gifford. There was one in 1994, when Phil Donahue, who watched his videos and loved his painting technique, invited him to the show to promote his work. Ross took five audience members on- stage to do a painting and even Phil himself did a painting and showed it in that episode.

Ross at one time got an invitation to appear on Oprah but declined because he wanted to do paintings for the audience, while the show wanted to focus on couples who are in business together but do not live together.

In the early 1990s, Ross did several MTV promotional spots that, according to the American City Business Journals, 'dovetailed perfectly with Generation X's burgeoning obsession with all things ironic and retro.'

9

Personal life- Ross had two sons, Bob and- Steven, with his first wife, Lynda Brown. Steven, also a talented painter, occasionally appeared on The Joy of Painting and became a Ross- certified instructor. The last episode of Season 1 was a question- and- answer forum in which Steven read a series of general 'how- to' questions sent in by viewers during the season, and Bob answered them one at a time, technique by technique until he had completed an entire painting.

Ross and Brown's marriage ended in divorce in 1981. Ross and his second wife, Jane, had a son named Morgan, who

is also an accomplished painter. In 1993, Jane died from cancer, and Ross did not remarry.

10

Illness and death- Ross was diagnosed with lymphoma in the early 1990s, which eventually forced his retirement after *The Joy of Painting*'s final episode aired on May 17, 1994.

He died at the age of 52 on July 4, 1995. His remains are interred at Woodlawn Memorial Park in Gotha, Florida.

Legacy- Since his death, Ross has been embedded in multiple instances in pop culture, commenting on a 2017 News story about him, website, Screen Rant would note that the artist 'continues to have one of the most remarkable second lives of any media figure of the past several decades' References to him have been included in television shows including *Family Guy*, *The Boondocks*, and *Peep Show*. He would also appear in the YouTube series *Epic Rap Battles of History*.

Google celebrated the 70th anniversary of his birth with a Google Doodle on October 29, 2012. It portrayed Ross

painting a depiction of the letter 'g' with a landscape in the background.

In 2015, Bob Ross was included in a commercial for HGTV Sherwin-Williams paint along with Leonardo da Vinci, Andy Warhol, Michelangelo, and Vincent van Gogh.

As part of the launch of Twitch Creative, Twitch. tv hosted a nine-day marathon of Bob Ross' the Joy of Painting series which started on October 29, 2015, in commemoration of what would have been his 73rd birthday.

Twitch reported that 5.6 million viewers watched the marathon, and due to its popularity, created a weekly rebroadcast with one season of The Joy of Painting to air on Twitch each Monday, and will have a marathon of episodes each October 29. A portion of the advertising revenue has been promised to charities, including St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

In June 2016, Ross' series Beauty Is Everywhere being added to the Netflix lineup. The 30- minute episodes are very close in nature to The Joy of Painting series (minus the original few minutes for commercials.)

In May 2017, Ross' likeness was added as a skin for Sylvanus in the MOBA video game Smite. Of the inclusion, website VentureBeat would go on to call it, 'one of the most bizarre crossovers in gaming history.' At one point Ross was going to have his own video game to be released on Wii, the Nintendo DS and PC with development handled by AGFRAG Entertainment Group although this never came to fruition.

In 2017, a board game titled- Bob Ross: The Art of Chill was released and carried by Target Stores.

The saying we know and love very, 'a then paint will stick to a thick paint.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Clouds are very free.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Just put a few do-er's in there...'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Decide where your little footy hills live.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Ha ha, and just beat the devil out of it.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'I like to beat the brush-
beat the devil out of it.' 'You can use a brush rack to hit the
brush on. Otherwise, you will become unpopular real fast.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'If you did this with
yellow, and you went over it with blue, you would end up with
a... with a translucent... green. And it's gorgeous. It is
GORGEOUS.'

ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'If you did this with blue, and
you went over it with yellow, you would end up with a nice
green sky. And that's not the thing we are looking for.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Just lightly blend it, one
hair and some air.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Tender as a mother's
love... And with my mother, that was certainly true.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Let's do a little cabin-
ectopy here.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Oh, you'd be in Agony
City by now.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Just scrape in a few indications of sticks and twigs and other little things in there.

People will think you spend hours doing this.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Little raccoons and old possum's 'n' stuff all live up in here.

They've got to have a little place to sit.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Little squirrel's 'n' rabbits, and if this was in Florida or Georgia somewhere down there, might be an alligator or two hid back here.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Maybe in our world, their lives a happy little tree over there.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Oh, green water... oh that's pretty. Boy, I like that, just alive with algae.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Oh, that would make a nice place to fish. I like fishing, but I'm not a very good fisherman. I always throw the fish back into the water, just put a band-aid on his mouth, tapping I'm on the patootie and let him on his way. And maybe someday, if I'm lucky, I'll get to catch him again.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'O-ooh, if you have never been to Alaska, go there while it is still wild. My favorite uncle asked me if I wanted to go there, Uncle Sam. He said if you don't go, you're going to jail. That is how Uncle Sam asks you.'

ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'People look at me like I'm a little strange when I go around talking to squirrels and rabbits and stuff.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'That's ok. That's just okay.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'People might look at you a bit funny, but it's okay. Artists are allowed to be a bit different.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Sh-whoop, he-he, you have to make those little noises, or it just doesn't work.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Talk to the tree, make friends with it.'

I taught my son to paint mountains like these, and guess what? Now he paints the best darn mountains in the industry.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'That's a crooked tree. We'll send him to Washington.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'That's where the crows will sit. But we'll have to put an elevator to put them up there because they can't fly, but they don't know that, so they still try.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'The only thing worse than yellow snow is green snow.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'The secret to doing anything is believing that you can do it. Anything that you believe you can do strong enough, you can do. Anything. As long as you believe.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'The trees are oh so soft, oh so soft- I- a love it.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'There's nothing wrong with having a tree as a friend.' Trees cover up a multitude of sins.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Try to imagine that you are a tree. How do you want to look out here?'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Water's like me. It's lazy... Boy, it always looks for the easiest way to do things.'

ROSS SAID QUOTING-'We don't make mistakes, we just have happy accidents.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING-'We tell people sometimes: we're like drug dealers, come into town and get everybody absolutely addicted to painting. It doesn't take much to get you addicted.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'We want happy paintings. Happy paintings. If you want sad things, watch the news.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'We're going to make some big decisions in our little world.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'Well, the little clock on the wall says we're just about out of time. God bless you, my friend.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'From all of us here I'd like to wish you happy painting... and God bless my friend.'

‘When I was teaching my son Steve to paint, I used to tell him, just pretend he was a whisper, and he floated right across the mountain, that easy, gentle, make love to it, caress it.’

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- ‘You can do anything you want to do. This is your world.’

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- ‘I can’t go over 30 minutes because, we have a mean ol’ director with no sense of humor.’

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- ‘You can put as many or as few as you want in your world.’

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- ‘Even if you’ve never painted before, this one you can do.’

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- ‘This is the hardest part of this method. If you can do this, you can do anything.’ Roll it in a little bright red and let’s sign this right in here. Luckily- I have a short name so it’s easy to sign.’

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- ‘And just go straight in like you’re going to stab it. And barely touch it...barely touch it.’

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'When we teach people to paint this is the one, they fall in love with. It works so well.'

11

10 Members of Bob Ross's- Happy Little Menagerie
Famed TV painter and personality Bob Ross is known the world over for being one of history's sweetest, gentlest souls, and thankfully, that attitude extended well beyond his 18- by- 24- inch canvasses. Ross was an ardent animal lover, a passion which often made its way onto The Joy of Painting. His crew of animal companions was a big hit among the fans and showcased Ross's particular tastes in the creatures of the world. In lieu of cats, dogs, or guinea pigs, Ross took a liking to the very creatures you might expect to see in his happy little landscapes. Our list contains as many of those animals as we could find and could also serve as lyrics to a Ross- themed revamp of 'The Twelve Days of Christmas.'

Many of the clips below are full episodes and you'll have to skim through a lot of them to get to the critters- or just watch the entire thing. Let's face it: You were probably going to anyway. More from mental floss studios Fun- no?

The most horrifying mugs in the world PEAPOD THE POCKET SQUIRREL- No single animal got more airtime on The Joy of Painting than Peapod- a tiny little squirrel that, according to Ross, liked to sit in his pocket. While viewers never got a glimpse of that particular bonding experience, we did get to see the painter feed his rodent friend with a bottle ('Aren't they the most precious characters you've ever seen?')

...And hold him in the palm of his hand while the furry friend slumbered away ('I like to just watch him sleep'.) The 'peekaboo squirrel' made a handful of appearances on the show and was so beloved, he even inspired a successor (see #2.) PEAPOD JR. While the original Peapod might've been a special rodent, he was part of a long tradition of Ross being absolutely nuts for squirrels. He often owned several at a time, caring for them in the early stages of life before releasing them out into his backyard. A rotating scurry of squirrels did guest spots on the series and were a favorite among fans.

HOOT THE OWL- Ross's love of birds was second only to squirrels. One of the avians' who got airtime was Hoot the Owl, who appeared on The Joy of Painting when he was only a few weeks old. 'He's nothing but down,' Ross says in the

clip above. 'As I mentioned earlier, he and I both have the same hairdresser. We've both got the fuzz top up here.'

The cute 'little devil' (Ross referred to animals almost exclusively as little 'rascals' or 'devils') also appeared later on as a full- grown bird. Ross had several friends who cared for rescues, including Diana Schaffer (or as he called her, the 'bird lady'.) On a visit to her home, Ross spent time with sparrows, a hawk, a wild turkey, a baby groundhog, and even whispered some of his sweet nothings to a blind robin, which you can see above.

As for Hoot, Ross reflected: 'Old Hoot though, he's grown. By the time you see this show, he will have been turned loose and he'll be long gone. By the time you see this, he'll probably have a little condo in Miami and house payments, a BMW in the driveway ... he'll be like the rest of us. All trapped with responsibilities. He may even have children of his own.'

A PAIR OF BABY ROBINS- When these fine feathered friends appeared on the show, Ross named them Richard and Cathy after a couple of the show's camera people. The hungry 'little rascals' earned their names because of their similarities to

their human counterparts: Richard's hair was thinning, and Cathy was chatty.

CHIMNEY SWIFTS- In the clip above, four of these cute '*little devils*' hang onto Ross's shirt like we all would if given the opportunity.

LITTLE BIT, THE SHERMAN'S FOX SQUIRREL- What's better than a squirrel? A giant squirrel of course. On one episode, Ross's friend Cindy introduced him to Sherman's fox squirrel named Little Bit, and the rodent lover nearly lost his mind.

A GREAT HORNED OWL- Cindy also gave Ross the opportunity to spend some time with a great horned owl, who inspired this lovely reflection: 'I like animals so much. I'm telling' you, I could just about making a career out of taking care of these little rascals. They're so beautiful. Isn't that something?'

A SANDHILL CRANE- Another one of Cindy's creatures was a rescue crane that was born with a twisted neck- a possible result of an abnormality that occurred in the egg. In addition to that encounter, there's more footage of Ross with Sherman's fox squirrel.

DEER- While visiting another friend with rescue animals named Carmen Shaw, Ross met a pair of deer ('I love these little characters, I want to take them all home with me') and a baby raccoon. In another episode, he cradled a baby deer and fawned over the fawn in those signature dulcet tones and all was right with the world. (He mentioned on both occasions that he couldn't imagine shooting Bambi.)

A BABY RACCOON- In a baby raccoon appearance, Ross fed one of the primarily nocturnal beasts with a bottle and said maybe his most disparaging animal comment ever, about how the mammals are sweet as babies, but grow up to be 'pretty tough little characters.' He also references burping the little guy, which tragically wasn't captured for posterity on film.

12

Bob Ross: 13 Happy Little Facts-

About the Iconic PBS Painter- In honor of the TV painter's birthday today, Bob Ross authors Kristin G. Congdon, Doug Blandy, and Danny Coeyman reveal 13 fun facts about the man behind the 'happy little trees' phenomenon.

Bob Ross, the painter, and television personality was a prolific artist who purportedly completed 30,000 paintings during his lifetime. Bob Ross wanted everyone to believe that they could be artists. While some may not like Bob Ross' paintings, there are very few people who dislike the artist.

Robert (Bob) Norman Ross was born in Daytona Beach, Florida on October 29, 1942, to Jack and Ollie Ross. Bob Ross' father was a carpenter and builder. For a time, Bob worked with his father doing carpentry. From his mother, Ollie, Bob learned a love and respect for wildlife.

Bob Ross has been dead twenty years.

However, his stardom continues to grow. There are Bob Ross Clubs; T-shirts display his image and sayings; and Internet memes poke fun at his soothing spoken aphorisms described by his business partner, Annette Kowalski, as 'liquid tranquilizer.' He lives on as a cultural meme. Lego figures, Halloween costumes, and cartoons of Bob are ubiquitous on the Internet. It's easy to imagine that Bob would love to see his work embraced and celebrated by so many people in their own individual and collective ways.

Despite Bob Ross' international fame, no comprehensive critical biography with substantiated facts from primary sources exists. It is as if Bob Ross lives outside of any larger artistic, educational, and/or entertainment context. Instead, the Bob Ross story is told through word of mouth, narratives recorded in fanzines, posts on message boards, blog postings, Internet tribute pages, obituaries, feature stories in the popular press, Wikipedia entries, and Bob Ross, Inc. publications. This lack of vetted historical information has contributed to Bob Ross being more of a legend than an important historical figure in the art world.

Here are 13 things to know about Bob... Bob was in the United States Air Force. How did this mild-mannered painter become so soft-spoken? Possibly because of his time in the Air Force. Bob is alleged to have been a drill sergeant while in the military. He is quoted as saying that after yelling so much in the Air Force; he never wanted to yell at anyone again.

Whether or not he yelled at recruits, Bob definitely served in the Air Force and gathered inspiration while stationed in Alaska. The mountains in his landscapes are a callback to this time in his life.

Bob didn't invent his painting style. He learned it from another how- to television painter, William Alexander.

Around 1960 Bob joined the Air Force. Stationed first in Florida he was eventually transferred to an air base in Alaska. To augment his Air Force, pay, Bob took a job as a bartender and sold his landscape paintings on gold prospecting pans to tourists.

William Alexander was teaching the wet- on- wet oil painting technique on television long before Bob Ross. While in Alaska, Bob saw Alexander's show on TV in a local tavern. Eventually, the two worked together. When Bob began his own show, Alexander made a promotional commercial with Bob where he handed off a paintbrush as a symbolic nod to Bob as his painterly heir apparent. After Bob became more popular, Alexander and Bob had a falling out. Even so, Bob gave full credit to Alexander for teaching him to paint.

Bob popularized an art historical painting technique call 'alla prima.'

Bob Ross' oil painting technique, 'wet on wet,' is also known as 'all- prima' or 'direct painting.

‘Oil painters have used this technique since at least the 16th century. As an all- a prima painter, Bob Ross is in excellent company.

Rembrandt, Hals, Fragonard, Gainsborough, Monet, Sargent, and de Kooning have used the technique in their work.

Bob marketed a line of paints made specifically for the wet- on- wet technique. These paints proved to be very lucrative and continue to be a main source of revenue for Bob Ross, Inc.

At least 90% of viewers do not paint along with Bob. Never- Ever... According to PBS, which continues to air The Joy of Painting, fewer than 10 percent of viewers ever painted along with Bob. Although the show faithfully teaches his techniques, it turns out few people tuned in to make art. Bob’s soothing tones welcomed latchkey kids and his cathartic creativity comforted the homebound.

For many, the Joy of Painting is a respite from the negativity and din of regular television programming.

The Joy of Painting is an alternate quiet place of happy clouds and trees.

Bob often donated his paintings to fundraisers at PBS.

Purchasing an original Bob Ross painting is likely to be difficult. Few painters are copied by so many as Bob and copycat versions of his artworks abound. In addition, many of Bob's works were never sold. Bob donated much of his artworks to PBS stations to help them with fundraisers and donor drives.

So-o few are now available for placement above the sofas of people's homes. The best place to see an original Bob Ross painting is to visit the Bob Ross Workshop in New Smyrna Beach, Florida.

There you will find a large collection of his paintings. Classes in the Bob Ross method of- painting are offered on a regular basis. At the workshop, you can also train to become a certified Bob Ross instructor in a landscape, florals, and wildlife painting.

Bob was missing a finger. This is true- he was missing a finger.

However iconic and well- known his image, Bob is still a man of surprises. One glaring fact, that even the most

faithful television watchers do not often notice, is that Bob was missing a finger. It was cut off on a saw while woodworking with his father in his youth. If you look carefully, you will see that Bob hid his missing digit by holding his palette with the hand missing the finger.

Bob permed his hair as a cost-saving measure (and later disliked it.)

In the beginning, the classes that Bob Ross was offering in shopping malls and art stores were yielding few students. As a cost-saving measure, Ross had his hair permed so as to require fewer haircuts. Supposedly Ross came to hate his frizzy hairstyle but maintained it out of necessity because it was how he was depicted on Bob Ross, Inc. products. Later, as a result of treatment for cancer, Bob lost his hair and wore a wig to keep up appearances.

Bob Ross painted in his basement.

Eventually, Bob Ross moved back to Orlando, Florida. His studio was in his basement. Linda Shrieves, a reporter for the Orlando Sentinel, described a visit to Bob Ross'

home. She reported that his inspiration came from postcards, snapshots, and calendars 'strewn' on the basement floor.

Bob created his image. The Bob Ross business coupled Bob's affable and humble person with a distinctive hairstyle and dress down costuming of open-necked shirt and jeans. Bob and Bob Ross, Inc. created a backstory for Bob that was very short on biographical detail. The Bob Ross story emphasized humble beginnings, an appreciation for nature, every person philosophy, and a loving character that extended to students, his television show viewers, and the injured animals he cared for and rehabilitated. This narrative was communicated by Ross and continues to be communicated through Bob Ross Inc.

Bob was hip to media; Long before social media, Bob was using the TV in interesting, interactive, and creative ways. On his own show, he would solicit viewers ideas for paintings to create, and share images from fans that were making his paintings. Bob made appearances on the Phil Donahue Show where he painted for a mesmerized Donahue and his audience. Exemplary of his media sophistication, was the decision by Bob in the early 1990's to do two promotional spots for MTV.

In each, he appeared in his characteristic open-necked shirt and jeans standing at an easel with palette and brush in hand. In just a little over twenty seconds each, he paints two landscapes that morph into the distinctive MTV logo.

Ross ends one spot by saying 'MTV, it's all just fluffy white clouds.' The other spot ends with Ross saying, 'MTV, the land of happy little trees.' After his death, Bob was lampooned on *The Boondocks* and *Celebrity Death Match* in much the same way.

Bob inspires other artists. In 2006 Scott Kaplan, a member of the Art Department at Ohio State University participated in an installation and performance at the Mahan Gallery in the Short North area of Columbus, Ohio. Titled *30 Days, 30 Minutes, 30 Paintings*, Kaplan installed in the gallery a studio environment mimicking Ross' *Joy of Painting* set up that included an easel, platform, palette, similar brushes, palette knife, all in similar locations to Ross.' Wearing blue jeans and a white t-shirt Kaplan, with a long distinctive mane of his own, painted along to a *Joy of Painting* episode. In a video made by *Alive TV* in Columbus, it is possible to see Kaplan painting with

Bob Ross while a throng of onlookers cheers him on shouting 'Paint those trees!'

From September 27, 2012, through October 21, 2012, the Screaming Sky Gallery in Portland, Oregon hosted the exhibit *Happy Little Trees: Contemporary Artists Take on the Iconic Television Painter Bob Ross*. Located in the hip and gentrifying Alberta Street neighborhood of Portland, the exhibit featured the work of 26 artists. Aaron Jasinski who also contributed a painting to the exhibit curated the exhibit. Jasinski, born in 1974, fondly remembers watching *The Joy of Painting* as a child. He went on to study graphic design and illustration at Brigham Young University earning a BFA.

Jasinski believes that he is part of a generation of artists whose work informed by nostalgia for childhood with many artists using childhood references in their work. For this pre-internet generation of artists, childhood, according to Jasinski, was a magical time in which popular culture references could be held in common rather than fragmented now because of the Internet.

For Jasinski, Bob Ross and *The Joy of Painting*, being an early introduction to art, is one of those references. In turn,

this inspired Jasinski's to curate- 'Happy Little Trees.' His goal for the exhibit was to bring together a group of artists responding to the influence of Bob Ross and/or the artistry of Bob Ross. A second goal was to bring attention to the influence of popular culture in people's lives.

When considering what to paint for the show, Jasinski considered doing a portrait or a landscape. Eventually, he combined the two by doing a portrait of a smiling Bob Ross with his hair as a basis for a landscape in which other popular culture figures, such as the Smurfs, Woody Wood Pecker, Yogi Bear, and Bambi are nested.

Bob is an Internet sensation.

Beyond the official and authorized presence of Bob Ross on the Internet, his unofficial and unauthorized presence can only be described as sensational. An easy way to grasp the ubiquitous and variety associated with the image of the man himself is to do a Google image search of 'Bob Ross' where the result will be a rich display of permutations of the man and his paintings.

Another place to experience the Bob Ross phenomenon online is to search for 'Bob Ross' on Follow gram the web interface for Instagram the photo sharing application. A similar search on Twitter and Tumblr yields similar results in text and images.

Bob is as famous as Andy Warhol- (on find grave.com.) On Find a Grave, you will find Bob's birth and death information, a brief description of who he was, pictures of him, and a picture of his grave marker in Woodlawn Memorial Park in Gotha, Florida.

As of October 9, 2015, one thousand four hundred and thirty- two 'flowers' and 'notes' have been submitted to the site. Animated and non- animated icons such as clapping hands, balloons, flower arrangements, and holiday greetings often accompany flowers.

Some also include tributes to Ross and his importance to a contributor's life. On Bob's page, he has rated at four points five stars out of five on the 'famous' scale (three hundred and seventy- two votes cast.) As a point of comparison, Andy Warhol is rated the same at two hundred and seventy-

two votes cast. He has received eight hundred and twenty- two flowers and notes as of October 9, 2015.

This article was written by- Kristin G. Congdon, Doug Blandy, and Danny Coeyman, based on their book, Happy Clouds, Happy Trees: The Bob Ross Phenomenon published by the University Press of Mississippi in 2014.

Bob Has made it he was shown on Family guy- Peter Griffin watched an episode of his show in 'Fifteen Minutes of Shame' in which Ross paints a bush that he tells the viewers that it's 'our little secret', and threatens to cut anyone that tells someone else that the bush is there. Peter drastically veered off Ross's direction, resulting in a sketch of the Family Ties cast. Also making Bob a little testy and cracked too- by saying I cut you- if you tell anyone I put that tree there.

July 4, 1995, New Smyrna Beach, FL Death and Legacy. The Joy of Painting was canceled in 1994 so that Ross could focus on his health; the famous TV instructor and the host had been diagnosed with lymphoma around that same time. Ross died from lymphoma at the age of 52, on July 4, 1995, in New

Smyrna Beach, Florida. Aug 4, 2016 Bob Ross -
Television Personality, Painter - Biography.com

<https://www.biography.com/people/bobross-9464216>

13

People also search for- Fred Rogers February 27, 2003, Pittsburgh, PA. Thomas Kinkade, April 6, 2012, Monte Sereno, CA Bill Alexander, January 24, 1997, Powell River, British Columbia, Canada Bob Ross said he made over 30,000 paintings in his lifetime. If he didn't sell them, where did his army of happy clouds go? We'll let Bob explain: 'One of the questions that I hear over and over and over is, 'What do we do with all these paintings we do on television?' Most of these paintings are donated to PBS stations across the country. They auction them off, and they make a happy buck with 'em.

So-o if you'd like to have one, get in touch with your PBS station, cause...we give them to stations all over the country to help them out with their fundraisers.'

If that's true, Ross probably donated around 1,200 paintings. Ross shot 403 episodes of Joy of Painting and made three copies of each painting per episode.

The first copy always hid off screen, and Ross referred to it while the cameras rolled (none of his on-air paintings were spontaneous.) Ross painted a third copy when filming finished. This time, an assistant would stand behind him and snap photos of each brushstroke. These pictures went into Ross' 'How to' books.

As for the 28,800 paintings Ross made outside of television?

We have only a vague idea. Some Ross actually sold.

Before becoming a TV star, Ross was an Air Force Master- Sergeant in Alaska.

There, he painted and sold gold pans. Later on, Ross taught lessons year- round, and he regularly gave free paintings to his students. Sometimes Ross kept his paintings, eventually donating them to charity. A couple of his pieces even found their way onto the black market: during Joy of Painting's second season, a burglar stole 13 reference paintings from Ross' van.

Do you own a Ross original? How'd you get your hands on it?

Note: Reader Kelli pointed us to the Bob Ross Art Workshop and Gallery in New Smyrna Beach, Florida, which hosts a collection of his paintings.

Jane Ross- Bob Ross' wife Died: 1993 - Spouse: Bob Ross (unknown to 1993.)

People also search for: Bob Ross, Morgan Ross, Steven Ross, Ollie Ross, Jack Ross, Lynda Brown

Children: Morgan Ross, Lynda Brown, Bob Ross' ex-wife, Spouse: Bob Ross (-1981,) People also search for: Bob Ross, Morgan Ross, Steven Ross, Ollie Ross, Jack Ross, Jane Ross.

15

23 Happy Little Bob Ross Facts- Most- Viewers Never Really Knew-

PBS painting superstar Bob Ross died 20 years ago this summer. While he is looked upon with irony these days, he was a huge television personality with a very surprising backstory that most probably overlooked at the time.

Sit back, think of happy trees and learn a little more about everyone's favorite afroed oil painter.

He Made Tons of Paintings by Ross' own estimates he made about 30,000 oil paintings over the course of his life, which equals out to about 576 portraits of happy trees each year!

He Donated Most of Them While he sold his painting early in his career, while he was on TV Ross gave most of his paintings away to PBS stations to help them raise money.

Ross Never Once Got Paid by PBS Ross never asked PBS to pay him for his services.

Instead, he had other income streams...

He Was a Heck of a Businessman- The Joy of Painting show was actually a great marketing tool for Ross, who earned a living with his painting supplies, videos, and teaching.

He Worked Really Fast Ross' unique style of painting, which his show taught to viewers, emphasized moving quickly and efficiently. So quickly, in fact, Ross could tape an entire season's worth of shows in a matter of a day or two.

Which Left Lots of Free- *Time*- While he dedicated a great deal of time teaching others to paint in person and certifying instructors to teach his method, he also published about 20 books and 100 videos.

He Made Good Money Doing It Bob Ross was a *\$15 million* a year business that actually continues to this day, selling supplies, videos, and books.

Ross was a Longtime Animal Lover- Ross frequently featured animals on his show and was known to contribute to animal- friendly charities. One story says that as a boy in Florida he was such an animal nut- he nursed a sick alligator back to health in his family's tub.

He Lost a Finger- as was said above yet is in this report also- working as a carpenter when he was younger, Ross actually lost part of an index finger. Luckily, it was his palette- holding hand and not his brush hand.

He Was a Career Army Man Prior to being a painting star, Ross was actually a Master Sergeant in the Air Force for 20 years.

Surprisingly, his military stint had a huge influence on his painting.

He Wasn't Always so- Nice According to *Wikipedia* and the Web:

Having held military positions that required him to be, in his own words, 'mean' and 'tough,' 'the guy who makes you scrub the latrine, the guy who makes you make your bed, the guy who screams at you for being late to work,' Ross decided that if he ever moved on from the military, he would never scream again.

That Wasn't The- Only Thing That Changed Him It was while he was stationed in Alaska and the state's dramatic landscape of snow- covered mountains that Ross began to take a serious interest in painting this landscape.

It Also Influenced His Speed-The military lifestyle, with intense periods of work followed by short bits of downtime, inspired Ross' superfast style of painting since, he could work that way while not screaming at airmen. Ross was always quick to praise his mentor, Bill Alexander, who taught him the fast wet- on- the wet technique of painting. Alexander

actually hosted a PBS show called The Magic of Oil Painting and it looks like that wasn't the only way he influenced Ross.

What Was The- Wet- On- Wet Technique?

The wet- on- wet technique that Ross perfected simply was a way to paint on top of wet oil paint instead of waiting for it to dry. This allowed beginners to learn oil painting quickly, with a minimum of tools and to complete pictures quickly, too.

He Had a Perm for Practical Reasons According to Wikipedia, when Ross left the Air Force to start a painting career, he permed his hair as a means to save money on getting haircuts.

However, it was a look that would stick, despite...

Ross Hated His Haircut Ross really didn't enjoy the afro by the time he could afford a decent haircut.

However, he realized that it held a lot of marketing potential and that he was known for the hair. So, he kept the bulbous hair for that reason.

The joy of- Painting Was not on That Long We tend to think of Ross' Joy of Painting show to be a perpetual powerhouse on public television, but in reality- it only ran for 11 seasons, from 1983- 1994. While that's nothing to sneeze at, it's not the huge back catalog most assume.

His Biggest Catchphrase- Ross became a big hit for PBS with his anyone- can- do- it attitudes and his mellow, southern drawl. But his optimistic outlook was also key, including this little phrase, which remains today: 'We don't make mistakes, just happy accidents.'

He Had a Good Sense of Humor-Ross was so well known that he shot a series of self- parodying ads for MTV in the late 1980's.

He Appeared on the Grand Ole Opry Once Ross was a big country music fan, so he naturally accepted the invitation to join Nashville legend, Hank Snow, onstage at the Grand Ole Opry in 1987.

Supposedly, Ross gave Snow a private painting lesson afterward.

He REALLY Liked Trees... His other catchphrase 'Happy little trees' was no accident. According to his ridiculously cool statistics rundown, Ross painted a tree in 91% of all his paintings.

He Died in 1995 After battling lymphoma for several years, Ross passed away at the age of 52.

Nickname- Bust 'em up Bobby Height- 6' 2' (1.88 m)

Lynda Lucille Freeman (7 April 1925 - 4 July 1995)
(his death) Lynda Brown- (Unknown - 1981) - (divorced) - (2 children) - Jane (Unknown- 1 August 1992) - (Her death) - (1 child) - Trade Mark (4) - Frizzy perm Soft, encouraging voice, His Beard Gentle, kind demeanor his wife, Jane, died during, The Joy of Painting (1983)'s 20th season in 1993. He dedicated the series to her.

Personal Quotes-

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'There are no mistakes in your world.'

BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING- 'We don't make mistakes; we just have happy little accidents.'

(On retiring from the Air Force) 'I was the guy who makes you scrub the latrine, the guy who makes you make your bed, the guy who screams at you for being late to work. The job requires you to be a mean, tough person. And I was fed up with it.'

16

Kids- Bob Ross, Vicky Ross (Bob's,) FIRST WIFE & their only (Son) Steve Ross: What the public should know about (Bob ROSS:) THE 'TRUTH.' Bob Ross died on July 4th. 1995 in Winter Spring's, FL... Bob cannot speak the (TRUTH) BUT I CAN! Because there are people, that think, BOB ROSS IS STILL ALIVE... MORE PHOTO'S WILL BE POSTED SOON, ON The fast rundown- for a school paper- FACEBOOK... CHECK THEM OUT. IF YOU ARE A 'FAN' OF BOB ROSS... AS 'BOB WOULD SAY: 'GOD BLESS.' VICKY ROSS Most of Bob Ross' 30,000 'happy little trees and clouds' were donated to charity and fundraisers Responsible for making people laugh at the old paint thinner gag, the beloved painter is most famous for his 'The Joy of Painting' show on PBS, which he presented for free. His income came mostly from Bob Ross Inc. which sold videos of art techniques and painting tools.

The show had a total of 403 episodes, running from 1983 until 1994, with some reruns. His wet on wet oil painting technique, along with his soothing voice, permed afro, and lighthearted demeanor, attracted the attention of millions of fans around the world.

Bob Ross was born in Daytona Beach, Florida and was raised in Orlando. He had two sons with his first wife, Lynda Brown: Bob Jr. and Steven, who was also a painter. His second marriage to Jane Ross ended in tragedy when she died in 1993.

Robert Norman 'Bob' Ross- as said- (October 29, 1942 - July 4, 1995.) In his episodes, he painted vast landscapes in exactly 30 minutes, using an oil technique that was inspired by a German painter, William Alexander, who had his own PBS show. It is unclear whether fans actually tried to paint while watching the show or were just in for the stress relieving 'magical properties' of Bob's voice.

Many fans admitted that they watched the show for the purpose of taking a relaxing nap. Nevertheless, the humble painter knew this and was not at all insulted. He managed to paint over 30,000 paintings that ended up being donated to charities and fundraisers.

Unbeknownst to many, Bob Ross also had a military history. After dropping out of the 9th grade, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force 1961 and served until 1981. He was a Master Sergeant, which required strict and harsh behavior, a lifestyle that Bob greatly despised.

Bill Alexander, in his show 'The magic of Oil Painting' which ran from 1974 to 1982. Bob Ross was working as a bartender when he first saw his show. Alexander was drafted as a Nazi Wehrmacht soldier who was captured by Allied soldiers. He avoided prison by painting portraits of the soldier's wives. This paved his way into the U.S.

The constant traveling via aircraft was more than just an inspiration for the majestic landscapes he painted. He was stationed at U.S. Air Force Clinic at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska, which is flawlessly portrayed and reflected in his stunning paintings of winter idylls. He decided to take up painting after he divorced his first wife in 1981.

Ross always supported the notion of practice being a key trait in painting in general. Saying: 'I really believe that if you practice enough you could paint the 'Mona Lisa' with a two-

inch brush.’ He strongly believed that talent was not needed in order to become a better painter.

Even though Bob Ross always encouraged his fans to experiment and find their own unique technique and style, many of his contemporaries didn’t appreciate Bob’s artwork and teaching method. Critics felt that Ross used a technique that cemented and ‘barricaded’ the artistic minds of students as it didn’t help in grounding their own style of painting.

About- this Iconic American painter and former television host of Public Television’s the Joy of Painting. His famous perm came about when he needed to save money and he was looking for a way around haircuts.

Before Fame- He served in the U.S. Air Force. During this period, he first experienced the Alaskan landscape when he was stationed at Elmendorf Air Force Base. Alaska would become a recurring theme in his artistic work. He was inspired to paint after seeing The Magic World of Oil Painting, the show hosted by his future mentor, Bill Alexander.

Trivia- He used his television fame to launch a successful brand of art supplies and instructional books.

Family Life He grew up with a half-brother, Jim, whom he would reference on his show. He was married two times, to women named Jane and Vicky.

He had one son named Steve.

Associated with his warm, soft-spoken instructional style bears comparison to that of fellow television personality Mr. Rogers.

Amongst the pantheon of notable public television personalities, Bob Ross easily ranks alongside the likes of Mr. Rogers and Elmo as a star who is universally loved and respected by the public. Despite being famous the world over for his balmy, soothing demeanor, his show *The Joy of Painting* and his amazing *'Fro*, we know surprisingly little about arguably one of the best-known artists in modern times.

This is partially because, for some reason, nobody ever really asked Bob Ross to do any interviews and he only gave a handful of them over the course of his life. In fact, in one of the surprisingly few quotes from the man himself that don't come from his show, he stated 'I never turn down requests for interviews. I'm just rarely asked.' However, in another interview

Ross gave with Egg Magazine, who specifically sought him out because they realized nobody knew anything about him, Ross sheepishly admitted that he liked to 'stay hidden' adding that he was 'sort of hard to find.' In fact, Ross was so hard to find that PBS once lost track of him, though it would seem few, if anybody, noticed until Ross called to let them know he'd moved to Orlando after the fact.

As a result of Ross' love of privacy, coupled with the apathetic attitude of interviewers back then, details about his life are notoriously hazy and difficult to nail down to the point that even the book, *Happy Clouds, Happy Trees: The Bob Ross Phenomenon*, chronicling his life and career was, in the end, forced to admit that their 'text is... about an understanding, we have of Bob Ross and his life. If we had wanted to write an accurate biographical book on Bob Ross, that goal would be difficult to accomplish.'

A further hurdle for those looking to write about Ross is that his company, Bob Ross, Inc, today is fiercely protective of their intellectual property and Bob Ross' privacy, even in death. One of the few things they've authorized that would come close to an 'official' biography of his life is a

documentary titled 'Bob Ross: The Happy Painter' that can be viewed by pledging money to PBS or by tracking down a copy of the DVD, which is exactly what I had to end up doing to fill in the huge gaps of what I could find elsewhere about the elusive Bob Ross.

Finally, although Ross was a notable public figure who did a lot of charity work and met with hundreds, if not thousands of people over his lifetime, he only had a handful of close friends who understandably don't like discussing his life out of respect for his privacy. In fact, some of the only known interviews with Ross' family and friends about him can only be found today in the documentary mentioned previously.

With that out of the way, let's talk about the little we do know definitively about Bob Ross' life and how he became the cultural icon he is today.

Born in Daytona Florida in 1942, Ross was the child of a carpenter (Jack) and a waitress (Ollie) who separated, married other people, separated from those new partners and then got married to each other again all before their son had hit his teens. As a child, Ross entertained himself by caring for injured animals, much to the chagrin of his parents who soon

became used to coming home to find an injured alligator in their bathtub or an armadillo running around Ross' room.

Education wise, Ross left school in the 9th grade to support himself as a carpenter with his father, during which time he lost the tip of his left index finger in an accident, an injury he later hid from viewers most of the time with his paint palette. When he hit age 18, Ross joined the Air Force which saw him relocated from Florida to Alaska.

As far as we can tell, one of the few times Ross spoke openly about his time with the Air Force was in 1990 in a sit- down interview with the Orlando Sentinel where he explained that he disliked the job because it forced him to be 'mean', noting that he was: the guy who makes you scrub the latrine, the guy who makes you make your bed, the guy who screams at you for being late to work.

In stark contrast to the quiet, reserved nature Ross displayed on his show, in the Air Force he developed a reputation as a bit of a ball- buster, earning the nickname 'Bust 'em up Bobby' from his subordinates.

During his 20- year tenure with the Air Force, Ross developed a taste for painting after attending an art class at the Anchorage U.S.O. club. Luckily, he found himself to be a natural as he frequently found himself at odds with painting instructors at the many art classes he attended. You see, many of them were more interested in abstract painting which was en- vogue at the time. In Ross' own words: 'They'd tell you what makes a tree, but they wouldn't tell you how to paint a tree.'

Eventually, Ross found inspiration after watching a show called, *The Magic of Oil Painting* hosted by artist, Bill Alexander. Alexander touted a style of painting dating back to the 16th century called, *Alla prima* (an Italian term meaning 'first attempt') that allowed him to churn out a painting in little under a half an hour. *Alla prima* is better known in the art world as 'wet- on- wet' because it literally involves applying many layers of wet paint to a single canvas to create an image.

During a typical episode of *The Magic of Oil Painting*, Alexander would create a single painting, invariably a landscape of some sort, over the course of half an hour while slowly walking the viewers at home through the entire process. Ross

would later use an almost identical format for his show, The Joy of Painting, which greatly annoyed Alexander.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. After observing Alexander's technique and learning to use it himself, Ross began earning extra money by painting and then selling Alaskan mountainsides painted on the inside of novelty gold pans. Before long, Ross became fairly famous with locals for his talents and would often give demonstrations to children and the elderly.

After a while, Ross began making more money from selling paintings and offering people art lessons than he was from his day job in the military. As a result, Ross left the Air Force after two decades of service, supposedly quipping that he'd never yell or raise his voice again.

After leaving the Air Force, Ross returned to Florida in the early 1980's intent on seeking out Bill Alexander to learn the finer points of wet- on- wet painting. Alexander, who was an art teacher in his spare time, happily taught Ross everything he knew about painting, blissfully unaware that he was training his soon to be arch- nemeses.

(It would seem a missed opportunity that the pair never created a show: Artist Deathmatch, pitting themselves against one another in episodic paint offs. Viewers could then call in to vote on whose painting was the best on a given episode- master or apprentice- with the winner getting to destroy the other's losing painting in ever more elaborate ways at the start of the next episode where fans would learn who won on the previous show. This thing basically writes itself.

In any event, after a few months of lessons, Ross was offered a job with the Alexander Magic Art Supplies Company as a traveling tutor. While working for the company, Ross' hypnotic, soporific voice and gentle, prodding style that emphasized that there were 'no mistakes, just happy accidents' caught the attention of a lady called Annette Kowalski who later admitted that she was simply 'mesmerized' by Ross' personality. After a few lessons with Ross, Kowalski became convinced that if she could somehow 'package' the experience of painting with him, she and Ross could make a fortune.

After meeting with Kowalski and her husband, Ross was convinced to leave the Alexander Magic Art Supplies Company and set up his own teaching business.

Kowalski was so sure of success, that she sunk her life savings into the venture with Ross and his wife making a similarly daring contribution. In its first year of operation, the business lost \$20,000 (about \$45,000 today.)

With money tight, Ross made the bizarre decision to have his hair permed, exchanging the military crew cut he'd sported for two decades for his now iconic Afro. Ross' reasoning was that if he permed his hair, he'd save money in the long run because he'd no longer need to pay to have his hair trimmed once a week. Ross kept the *'Fro* for the rest of his life, though grew to dislike it in his later years.

They say According to Kowalski; Ross' afro was such a radical departure from his previous look that many of his old Air Force buddies watching the show only knew for sure it was him because of the missing bit of his finger.

Exactly how Ross went from 'perming his hair to save five dollars' to 'being on TV' isn't clear and there are two conflicting stories about how Ross came to the attention of PBS. The version recounted in the aforementioned PBS biopic of his life states that Ross filmed a commercial for the network with his former mentor, Bill Alexander, promoting his art classes that

just so happened to catch the eye of the right executive. Another otherwise reputable version of the story states that Kowalski filmed one of Ross' 30minute lessons and sent it to the network, who liked it enough to greenlight a pilot.

It's even possible that both of these things are true.

Whatever the case, it would seem Ross flawlessly executed the so-called 'Steve Martin' method to success- 'Be so good they can't ignore you.'

When the time came to film the first episode of *The Joy of Painting*, Ross made the conscious decision to speak as though he were talking to a singular viewer, giving the illusion that he was giving a private lesson.

Although the set for *The Joy of Painting* was positively spartan (a deliberate decision on Ross' behalf so as to not distract from the painting) a great deal of thought went into almost every aspect of the show. For example, Ross spent significant time picking out what clothes he'd wear on the air because he didn't want to wear any clothing that would 'date' the episodes.

As a result, Ross almost exclusively wore jeans and a casual shirt throughout the show's run, a look he felt would be 'current' regardless of how many years later an individual episode was aired. Another, less noticeable, thing Ross did was lightly sand his palette prior to filming so that it didn't reflect any of the lights in the studio. (In the first few episodes, he opted for a translucent palette for this same reason.)

Although the official Bob Ross website claims that episodes of The Joy of Painting weren't rehearsed, this isn't exactly true, something that becomes immediately obvious when you realize that Ross began every episode by saying exactly which colors he was going to use. Ross actually painted three copies of almost every painting ever featured on the show- a first that was painted beforehand and used for reference while filming; a second that was painted during the show itself; and a third that was painted afterwards with a photographer, allowing them to get good shots for the many painting books Ross released and sold.

Speaking of which, Ross was never actually paid for appearing on the show and he never sold a single painting featured on it. The show was instead used as a vehicle to

promote Ross' teaching business, interest in which exploded after the show first aired. Over time, the business expanded to include Bob Ross branded brushes, paint, supplies, etc., all making Ross a millionaire.

As for his paintings, with the exception of the ones he sold to tourists during his time in Alaska, Ross gave away virtually all of them made during the show's 403 episode run. As for the thousands of other paintings Ross made during his life, many of them were similarly given away or when Ross became a household name, given to various charitable causes to be auctioned off. Ross also disliked the idea of displaying his art in a museum or gallery, stating:

Most painters want recognition, especially by their peers. I achieved that a long time ago with TV. I don't need anymore.

In fact, during his lifetime, Ross only ever allowed one public institution to display his work- the Minnetrista Cultural Center in Muncie.

Old habits, as they say, are hard to break and Ross was secretive to the end, hiding the fact that he'd been

diagnosed with lymphoma in the 1990's from everyone but his closest friends and family. Ross continued painting almost until his final days, filming his show until 1994, just a year before he died at age 52. His final resting place is marked by a simple stone marker that reads: 'Bob Ross, Television Artist'

If you liked this article, you might also enjoy subscribing to our new Daily Knowledge YouTube channel, as well as: 15 Fascinating Facts You Probably Didn't Know About the Great Mr. Rogers The Revenge of Han van Meegeren, One of the Great Art Forgers of All Time Who Really Invented the TV Dinner?

The Real Monuments Men the Monkey Artist Hoax
Bonus-

Facts:

Bill Alexander became very bitter towards Ross after the success of The Joy of Painting, claiming that Ross betrayed him and stole the wet- on- wet style he'd pioneered. Funny enough, Bob Ross Inc eventually trademarked the term 'Bob Ross wet- on- wet' helping to make the technique synonymous with Ross. However, Ross himself openly credited Alexander as

the man who showed him how to paint in his show's first episode.

Although immensely popular, Ross was widely criticized by many in the artistic community who felt insulted by his simplistic, anyone- can- do- it approaches to art. Ross mostly refused to engage his critics, as he painted for the joy of it (hence the name of his show.) An exception to this is the artist, Jackson Pollack, who Ross dismissively referred to as

'Jackson Pollard' because he didn't like the idea of Abstract Expressionism.

To quote Ross: 'If I paint something, I don't want to have to explain what it is.'

In 2014, the blog, Five Thirty-Eight performed a comprehensive statistical analysis of 381 episodes of The Joy of Painting and discovered the 91% of Ross' paintings 'included at least one tree.'

Meet the Woman Who- Discovered Bob Ross by:
Caitlin Schneider, July 4, 2015.

Annette Kowalski is probably around 75- something years old, but I don't know for sure because she wouldn't disclose the exact number.

Kowalski's official answer to how old she is 'very,' but she added that former business partner Bob Ross was around the same age and that I could deduce hers from that information. Ross died on July 4th, 1995 after a year-long battle with lymphoma. He would have been 73 in October.

Kowalski, the owner, and co-founder of the Bob Ross Company met its namesake in 1982 after losing her 24 year- old son in a traffic accident. Kowalski was devastated by the event and her grief gave way to a deep depression. She coped as best as could by lying on the couch and watching her favorite television painter and personality, Bill Alexander.

If you're not familiar with Alexander, his best (or most succinctly) described as the original Bob Ross- except he's German and bald. Alexander hosted The Magic of Oil Painting and The Art of Bill Alexander on PBS. Though he's largely unknown today, videos from his shows still live on YouTube and his profound influence on Ross are apparent before you even press play.

At a loss as to how to help his wife, Kowalski's husband Walt got on the phone and called Alexander's company in Oregon to inquire about making a cross-country trip from their home in Washington D.C. so Annette could take a class.

He was told that Bill Alexander was no longer teaching, but a young, unknown artist named Bob Ross was slated to take over. Ross had an upcoming class in Clearwater, Florida- so while he wasn't the man she'd been hoping for, Kowalski and her husband got in the car and drove the 14 hours to Clearwater.

Kowalski signed up for a five- day seminar, but it only took one for her to know that Ross was something special.

'I could not believe what I saw,' she said. 'People were mesmerized by Bob. I was so enthralled with him that I wasn't even doing my painting. I was following him around the room and watching him interact with people.'

Ross was a former military man who had served in the Air Force and was stationed for a time in Alaska, where he became well- acquainted with the kinds of landscapes, he'd go

on to paint on television. Ross eventually studied under Alexander after seeing him on TV and decided to try to carve a path as an artist and painting instructor before being tapped to continue the Alexander legacy. On the last day of that five- day class in Clearwater, Kowalski invited Ross to dine with her and Walt at a nearby hamburger joint. 'I said to Bob, 'It's a shame I had to drive 1500 miles to take this class. Would you come to Washington D.C.?' Kowalski recalled.

Ross agreed, quoting Kowalski an 'enormous' amount of money. She promptly booked a classroom at a local Holiday Inn and took out an advertisement in the newspaper. Only a couple of people showed up.

They moved on to Baltimore and then other cities. Still, no one came. Soon, the financial strain started to wear on Kowalski and her husband, who got fed up enough to propose the idea that would change everything. Walt suggested they recruit Bill Alexander to film a commercial in which he literally handed a paintbrush over to Bob, telling the world that Ross was now the bearer of the torch.

'Am I making any sense at all?'

Kowalski asked me this several times during our conversation, and she always was. Her only slip- up occurred when trying to recollect what happened next. She first told me they took the commercial right to PBS, but of course, PBS doesn't air commercials. In fact, they wanted the spot to run during The Phil Donahue Show, but it needed some work to get camera ready, so they took it to the local PBS station for help cutting the tape. When the manager at WNVC in Virginia saw it, he promptly recruited the young painter for a new television series.

Ross dedicated the first episode of The Joy of Painting in 1983 to Alexander, and from there, he was up and running.

See Also: 20 Bob Ross Quotes to Make Life Better
More than 30 years later, Bob Ross has become a global phenomenon. Certified Ross Instructors (or CRIs) are stationed all over the world and The Bob

Ross Art Workshop in- New Smyrna Beach, Florida has around 100 of his paintings on display. His other works (there are more than 500) have been stored away, one of which- never before seen by the public- will be revealed and

taught at the CRI reunion this October. I asked Kowalski if she could reveal any tantalizing details about the piece.

‘Oh, it’s just another landscape,’ she said.

For those interested, it takes three weeks to become a Certified Ross Instructor, which means you still have plenty of time before the reunion to become a member of the family.

See Also: What Happened to Bob Ross’s Paintings?

The Bob Ross Company is headquartered in Chantilly, Virginia where Kowalski still works to keep Bob Ross’ happy clouds and trees out in the world, through television, and in classrooms. She said she’s been surprised at how his fame has exploded in the Internet age, but added that it wasn’t just coincidence, crediting a lot of hardworking people behind the scenes. What hasn’t surprised her is that people continue to enjoy tuning in.

‘Most people don’t paint, they just watch,’ she said. ‘They like to hear his voice. They just like Bob.’ Near the end of the last season, I guess by this time he knew he had a terminal illness, almost every episode had a dead tree in it. He keeps making comments like ‘I don’t like it, but it happens in nature.’

'I just happened to tune in for episode 31x6 when he specifically mentioned that it's a dead tree and it happens in nature but it still there. No dead tree for 'Bridge to Autumn' but a big dead tree in 'Trail's End', same as the next one then a beach scene. His son Steve painted 'Lake at the Ridge', his stepmom (Bob's wife) died the year before and there are two dead trees in the painting. The next painting is in the winter and I didn't watch this episode, so I don't if the leafless tree in it are dead or are deciduous. Last painting, two dead trees in a field of green with a faded mountain in the back. In the last three painting, the dead trees are in pair and in the same style. I wonder if this was a subconscious choice or deliberate on his part.

All the painting was done on the show-go to:

<https://www.thetvdb.com/series/the-joy-of-painting/seasons/all>

The inventor of black canvas painting- with black canvas and cut outs also called famous easel was made out of a latter, and his play made for an old vinyl sign that he cut himself.

In painting, you have unlimited power. Ture in this style you have time to make movements changes, and or paint over, yet there is a limit to this also if you don't want to become a mud mixer, I myself have been painting this for years, in old and also in acrylics the same thing applies, you have the ability to move mountains.

Bob did that- Robert Norman Ross (October 29, 1942 - July 4, 1995) was an American painter, art instructor, and television host. He was the creator and host of The Joy of Painting, an instructional television program that aired from 1983 to 1994 on PBS in the United States and also aired in Canada, Latin America, and Europe.

With a soft voice and a permed afro, Ross went from being a public television personality in the 1980s and 1990s to be an Internet celebrity in the 21st century, popular with fans on YouTube and many other websites. You can bend rivers.

He said, and you can with his books and videos showing you everything you need to know... Remember our Golden Rule: A thin paint sticks to a thick paint. Bob Ross Rural Paint Set with extras contains the following: 8 Bob Ross Oil Paints: Bright Red, Phthalo Blue, Midnight Black, Alizarin

Crimson, Cadmium Yellow, Van Dyke Brown, Titanium White, Sap Green (1.25 oz. each) 1' Brush, 2' Brush, Large Fan Brush, Liner Brush, Large Painting Knife, Liquid White and a 90- Minute DVD that covers each painting (Winter's Peace, Old Country Mill and Days Gone By) in great detail... PLUS!... a Bob Ross Canvas, a Bob Ross Clear Plastic Palette, 32 oz.

Bob Ross Odorless Thinner (ground service delivery only) and how- to written instructions for the three beautiful Bob Ross scenes!

This offer available only in The United States and Canada. But when I get home, the only thing I have power over is the garbage. Early life, Ross was born in Daytona Beach, Florida, and raised in Orlando, Florida. He had a half-brother, Jim, whom he mentioned in passing on his show. While working as a carpenter with his father, Ross lost part of his left index finger, but it did not affect the way he held his palette while painting.

Military career Ross enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1961 at 18 years old and served as a medical records technician.

15 He eventually rose to the rank of expert sergeant and served as the first sergeant of the U.S. Air Force Clinic at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska, where he first saw the snow and mountains that later became recurring themes in his artwork. He developed his quick-painting technique to create art for sale during brief daily work breaks. Having held military positions that needed him to be, in his own words, ‘tough’ and ‘mean’, ‘the guy who makes you scrub the latrine, the guy who makes you make your bed, the guy who screams at you for being late to work’, Ross decided that if he ever left the military, he would never scream again. ‘And that makes it look like birch trees, isn’t that sneaky? Heh. Ha. It’s gorgeous.’

Career as a painter- While staying in Alaska, Ross was working as a part-time bartender when he discovered a TV show called The Magic of Oil Painting, hosted by German painter Bill Alexander. 17-18 Ross studied with Alexander and afterward discovered that he was able to earn more from selling his artwork than his position in the Air Force. Ross retired from the Air Force in 1981 after 20 years of service, having the rank of Master Sergeant, and became famous worldwide for creating and hosting the TV program The Joy of Painting.

‘Here’s your bravery test!’ - ‘You know me, I got to put in a big tree.’ He said this over and over.

Before the show launched, Ross had little success promoting his painting technique. His trademark permed hairstyle came about as a cost-cutting measure when regular haircuts became too expensive. Ross was never comfortable with the style but kept it throughout his career.

The show had its first run from January 11, 1983, to May 17, 1994, but reruns continue to appear in many broadcast areas and countries, including the PBS- oriented network Create. During each half-hour segment, Ross would instruct viewers in oil painting using a quick- study technique from the imagination that used a limited palette of paints and broke down the process into simple steps. Art critic Mira Schor compared him to Fred Rogers, host of Mister Rogers’ neighborhood, noting that Ross’s soft voice and the slow pace of his speech were similar- BOB ROSS SAID QUOTING-‘Got to give him a friend. Like I always say, ‘everyone needs a friend.’

Ross also filmed wildlife, squirrels, usually in his garden shed, and he would often take in injured or abandoned squirrels and other animals. Small animals often appeared on

his Joy of Painting canvasses Ross built a \$15 million business selling his line of art supplies and how- to books and marketing painting classes taught by instructors trained in the 'Bob Ross method.'

All of his income, he said, was derived from those sources; all of his paintings, including those created during his shows, were donated to PBS stations.

We don't know where it goes. We don't really care.

Ross used the wet- on- wet oil painting technique, in which the painter continues adding paint on top of still wet paint rather than waiting a lengthy amount of time to allow each layer of paint to dry. From the beginning, the program kept the choice of tools and colors simple so that viewers would not have to make large investments in expensive equipment.

Ross often recommended odorless paint thinner (aka odorless mineral spirits) for brush cleaning.

Combining the wet painting method with the use of large one- and two- inch brushes, as well as painting knives, allowed Ross to paint trees, clouds, mountains, and water in a matter of seconds. Each painting would start with simple

strokes that appeared as nothing more than smudges of color. As he added more and more strokes, the blotches would transform into intricate landscapes.

‘Any way you want it to be, that’s just right.’

Ross created three versions of each painting for each episode of his show. The first was painted prior to taping, and sat on an easel, off- camera, during a taping, where Ross used it as a template to create the second copy- the one viewer actually watched him paint.

After taping the episode, Ross painted a third, more detailed version for inclusion in his instructional books.

‘As my son Steve says, just ‘smoosh’ it in there. It’s not a real word, but people seem to know what it means.’

<https://www.bobross.com/Articles.asp?ID=301>

To become an instructor ‘Be sure to use odorless paint- thinner. If it’s not odorless, you’ll find yourself working alone very, very quick.’

<https://www.thetvdb.com/?tab=seasonall&id=79167>

‘Happy painting and god bless my friend- until next time!’ The last thing you need to remember Bob Ross by.

